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ENVIRONMENT

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Speaker Michael Dowd offers antidote to climate despair

By William Nuttle

Author and theologian Michael Dowd will be speaking on June 16 at St. Matthew's Anglican Church about how to avoid despair and remain hopeful in view of the current climate predicament. In Dowd's view, people must seek the right relationship with reality, one that recognizes the limits placed on us by ecology and the challenges we face living together as a community.

Born in 1958, Dowd is an American Progressive Christian minister, community organizer and evangelical eco-theologian. Since 2002, Dowd and his wife, science writer and fellow climate activist Connie Barlow have spoken to over 2,200 religious and secular audiences across North America. Dowd draws his inspiration from the eco-theology of the late Thomas Berry as well as the contemporary climate change activism of Katherine Hayhoe, Bill McKibben and James Hansen. His work has been featured in *The New York Times*, other major news publications and on national television in the U.S.

Dowd set out in 2014 to find the source for the heroic sense of purpose that is needed to meet the extraordinary challenges the world faces today. He interviewed 55 people selected from among the world's most respected scientists, visionaries and healers who are working for change in the areas of environmental stewardship, equity and social justice. The interviews, now available online as a virtual symposium called "The Future's Calling Us to Greatness," explore what it is that inspires these visionaries to act and how they keep going in the face of discouraging odds.

The program, ProFuture Faith: The Prodigal Species Comes Home, will be held at St. Matthew's Church, 130 Glebe Avenue between 7 and 9 p.m. Admission is free, but donations are requested to cover the costs of the evening. Dowd will also be speaking at St. Matthew's during the regular Sunday service at 10 a.m. For more information, visit the website stmatthewsottawa.ca, or call 613-234-4024.

William Nuttle is a long-time resident of the Glebe and a member of St. Matthew's Church.



PHOTO: COURTESY OF M. DOWD

Michael Dowd, eco-theologian and author, will lecture on "ProFuture Faith" on June 16 at St. Matthew's Church.